

This Page Is Inserted by IFW Operations
and is not a part of the Official Record

BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

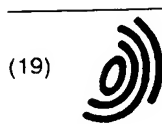
Defects in the images may include (but are not limited to):

- BLACK BORDERS
- TEXT CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- FADED TEXT
- ILLEGIBLE TEXT
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- COLORED PHOTOS
- BLACK OR VERY BLACK AND WHITE DARK PHOTOS
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

**As rescanning documents *will not* correct images,
please do not report the images to the
Image Problem Mailbox.**

This Page Blank (uspto)



Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11) EP 1 168 835 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
02.01.2002 Bulletin 2002/01

(51) Int Cl.7: H04N 5/445

(21) Application number: 01305361.6

(22) Date of filing: 20.06.2001

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE TR
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

(72) Inventors:
• Uchida, Mami
Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo (JP)
• Mizobuchi, Ayumi
Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo (JP)
• Takeda, Kasumi
Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo (JP)

(30) Priority: 29.06.2000 JP 2000195616

(71) Applicant: SONY CORPORATION
Tokyo 141 (JP)

(74) Representative: Horner, David Richard et al
D Young & Co, 21 New Fetter Lane
London EC4A 1DA (GB)

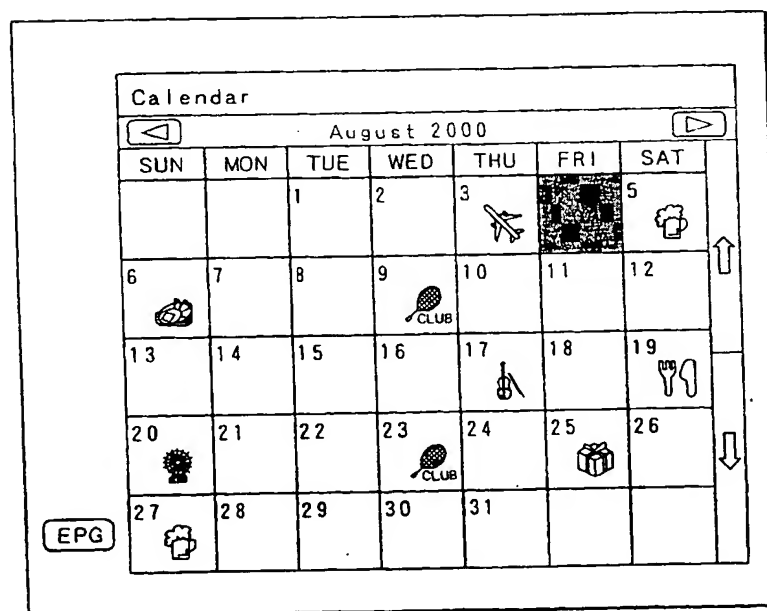
(54) Reservation information setting apparatus and method thereof

(57) There are provided a reservation information setting apparatus and a method thereof, which are capable of setting recording reservation and program viewing reservation of a target broadcast program correctly and easily.

According to embodiments of the invention, per-

forming given operation permits a control section to form a calendar as a schedule table, and to display the calendar on a display. An input of schedule information into a date, which is selected in the displayed calendar, and an input of reservation information including program viewing reservation and recording reservation, are performed through the displayed calendar.

FIG. 5



EP 1 168 835 A2

Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to receivers handling various kinds of broadcast signals including, for example, television broadcasts, radio broadcasts, data broadcasts, satellite broadcasts, and cable television broadcasts, and to recording equipment for recording the broadcast signals.

[0002] For example, as recording apparatuses such as VTR (video tape recorder) having a built-in tuner, many recording apparatuses having a recording reservation function are provided. Concerning this recording reservation function, broadcast date and time of a broadcast program for which recording is desired, and its broadcast channel are set in the recording apparatus beforehand. When the set date and time come, the set broadcast channel is automatically selected, and then the target broadcast program is recorded on a recording medium such as a video tape.

[0003] Using this recording reservation function is convenient. Even if there is a schedule such as going out on broadcast date and time of a target broadcast program, a user can record the target broadcast program automatically on a recording medium, and can view it by playing back the recorded broadcast program at user's convenience.

[0004] In addition, receiving apparatuses handling satellite broadcasts called STB (Set-Top Box) and IRD (Integrated Receiver/Decoder) come to be provided. Among those apparatuses, there is an apparatus having a program viewing reservation function (program reservation function).

[0005] This program viewing reservation function sets the following information in the STB or the IRD beforehand: broadcast date and time of a broadcast program for which viewing is desired; its broadcast channel; and program selection information. When the set date and time come, the set broadcast channel is automatically selected; and the set broadcast program is selected to enable the user to view the target broadcast program.

[0006] Using this program viewing reservation function is convenient. Even if the user views a different broadcast program on the broadcast date and time of the target broadcast program, the user never misses the target broadcast program.

[0007] By the way, a status of the recording reservation can be checked by displaying a recording-reservation list on a display screen of a monitor apparatus such as a television receiver, which is connected to a VTR, in the following manner: using a display key for displaying the recording-reservation list, which is provided on the remote command unit (remote controller) of the VTR; or selecting a selection item for displaying the recording-reservation list from a menu included in the VTR.

[0008] Moreover, as is the case with the VTR de-

scribed above, a status of the program viewing reservation can be checked by displaying a program-viewing-reservation list on the display screen of the monitor apparatus in the following manner: using a display key for displaying the program-viewing-reservation list, which is provided on a remote command unit (remote controller) of an apparatus such as a STB and an IRD; or selecting a selection item for displaying the program-viewing-reservation list from a menu included in an apparatus such as a STB and an IRD.

[0009] These recording-reservation list and program-viewing-reservation list are special purpose screens that are configured to display reservation setting information including a reserved date, a day of the week, and a broadcast channel using text display and the like. The lists enable the user to check whether or not reservation of a target broadcast program is set correctly.

[0010] However, even if the user can check whether or not the reservation is properly set by displaying the recording-reservation list and the program-viewing reservation list, the user cannot check whether or not the recording reservation and the viewing reservation of the broadcast program are set as a result of taking user's own schedule into consideration. For example, if the user forgets his/her own schedule of going out, even if the user views the recording-reservation list and the program-viewing reservation list, the user often overlooks the fact that the user forgets the recording reservation and the program viewing reservation of a broadcast program which will be broadcasted at the time of the going-out schedule.

[0011] In addition, the recording reservation and the program viewing reservation are performed by inputting information including broadcast date and time, and a broadcast channel of a target broadcast program into an apparatus such as a recording apparatus, STB, and IRD. However, there is a possibility that a mistake of the recording reservation and the program viewing reservation of the target broadcast program is caused by misunderstanding about the broadcast date and time, and the broadcast channel. In this case, it is considered that checking the recording-reservation list and the program-viewing reservation list may not be sufficient to notice the mistake.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0012] In order to alleviate the above-mentioned problems, according to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a reservation information setting apparatus comprising: schedule table forming means for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information; date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in the schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from the schedule table forming means; schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table,

which has been selected through the date selection accepting means; and reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through the date selection accepting means.

[0013] Concerning the reservation information setting apparatus, a signal for displaying a schedule table, which preferably includes calendar information such as year, month, day, and a day of the week, may be formed by the schedule table forming means; and this signal permits the schedule table to be displayed on a display element included in the reservation information setting apparatus, or on a display element connected to the reservation setting apparatus by wire or by wireless means.

[0014] After that, when a selection input of a target date in the schedule table is accepted by the date selection accepting means, schedule information of the selected date is accepted through the schedule information accepting means. Additionally, when a selection input of a target date in the schedule table is accepted by the date selection accepting means, reservation information about broadcast programs of the selected date is accepted through the reservation information accepting means.

[0015] This permits the schedule information and the reservation information about broadcast programs to be inputted through the schedule table that includes the calendar information, enabling inputs of viewing reservation and recording reservation of the broadcast programs without misunderstanding broadcast date and time, and the like. Moreover, a user can input the reservation information about the broadcast programs taking his/her own schedule into consideration.

[0016] In addition, the reservation information setting apparatus may further comprise: display instruction accepting means for accepting an input of an instruction to display a broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date if a selection input of the target date is accepted through the date selection accepting means; and broadcast program guide forming means for forming a signal for displaying the broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date on the basis of broadcast program guide information if a display of the broadcast program guide is instructed through the display instruction accepting means; wherein the reservation information accepting means accepts an input of the reservation information through the broadcast program guide formed by the broadcast program guide forming means.

[0017] Concerning the reservation information setting apparatus, when the date selection in the schedule table is accepted through the date selection accepting means, then preferably an input of the instruction to display the broadcast program guide corresponding to the accepted date is accepted through the display instruction accepting means.

[0018] When the input of the instruction to display the broadcast program guide is accepted through the display instruction accepting means, then preferably a signal for displaying the broadcast program guide corresponding to the selected date in the schedule table is formed by the broadcast program guide forming means according to the broadcast program guide information, and then the broadcast program guide is displayed on the display element according to this signal. Through the broadcast program guide displayed on this display element, the reservation information accepting means may be used to accept an input of the reservation information about the target broadcast program.

[0019] As a result, concerning the reservation information about the broadcast programs that will be broadcasted on the target date, the reservation information including the viewing reservation and the recording reservation of the broadcast programs can be inputted and set through easy operation, that is to say, by selecting a target broadcast program from the broadcast program guide displayed on the display element. Therefore, reservation information about the target broadcast programs can be inputted and set without a mistake and easily on the target date.

[0020] In addition, in the reservation information setting apparatus, the schedule table forming means may form a signal for displaying the schedule table that includes the schedule information accepted through the schedule information accepting means, and the reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means.

[0021] Concerning the reservation information setting apparatus of preferred embodiments, the schedule table forming means forms the signal for displaying the schedule table that includes the schedule information accepted through the schedule information accepting means and the reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means, and then the schedule table is displayed by this signal.

[0022] In this case, the schedule information accepted through the schedule information accepting means and the reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means include information that has been inputted in the past. Therefore, new reservation information can be inputted and set without a mistake and easily while checking calendar information, schedule information, and reservation information, which are included in the schedule table.

[0023] In addition, in the reservation information setting apparatus, the broadcast program guide information may be an electronic program guide that is included in a broadcast signal for the purpose of delivery.

[0024] Concerning the reservation information setting apparatus, for example, in the digital broadcasts, and the like, of satellite broadcasts and terrestrial broadcasts, a broadcast program guide, which can be used for inputting reservation information about the viewing reservation and the recording reservation, and the like,

for a broadcast program, may be created using an electronic ; programming guide (EPG), which is included in a broadcast signal for the purpose of delivery, as broadcast program guide information.

[0025] The electronic program guide preferably provides the following information: titles of broadcast programs and schedule broadcast programs; broadcast station names; program content such as outline; casts; and the like. In this manner, the broadcast program guide provided to the user can be created according to correct information that is rich in content, and that is supplied from the broadcast station side. The user can set the viewing reservation and the recording reservation of the target broadcast program without a mistake and easily using the provided broadcast program guide.

[0026] In addition, according to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided electronic equipment comprising: a reservation information setting apparatus including: schedule table forming means for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information; date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in the schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from the schedule table forming means; schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through the date selection accepting means; and reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through the date selection accepting means; reservation information storing means for storing the reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means; and viewing control means for controlling a broadcast program shown by viewing reservation information so as to permit the broadcast program to be viewed if the reservation information stored in the reservation information storing means is the viewing reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the viewing reservation information is detected.

[0027] Concerning the electronic equipment, reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means is stored in the reservation information storing means. When coming of the date and time shown by the viewing reservation information stored in the reservation information storing means is detected by the viewing control means, the broadcast program shown by the viewing reservation information can be viewed.

[0028] This permits the viewing reservation information to be set certainly and easily, and thereby permits the target broadcast program to be automatically viewed according to the viewing reservation information that has been set. Therefore, it is possible not to miss the target broadcast program.

[0029] In addition, according to a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided electronic equipment comprising: a reservation information setting apparatus including: schedule table forming means for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information; date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in the schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from the schedule table forming means; schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through the date selection accepting means; and reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through the date selection accepting means; reservation information storing means for storing the reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means; information signal storing means for storing an information signal; and recording control means for controlling a broadcast program shown by recording reservation information so as to record the broadcast program in the information signal storing means if the reservation information stored in the reservation information storing means is the recording reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the recording reservation information is detected.

[0030] Concerning the electronic equipment, reservation information accepted through the reservation information accepting means is stored in the reservation information storing means. When coming of the date and time shown by the recording reservation information stored in the reservation information storing means is detected by the recording control means, the broadcast program shown by the recording reservation information is stored in the information signal storing means.

[0031] This permits the recording reservation information to be set certainly and easily, and thereby permits the target broadcast program to be automatically recorded according to the recording reservation information that has been set. Therefore, it is possible to record the target broadcast program certainly.

[0032] Further particular and preferred aspects of the present invention are set out in the accompanying independent and dependent claims. Features of the dependent claims may be combined with features of the independent claims as appropriate, and in combinations other than those explicitly set out in the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0033] The present invention will be described further, by way of example only, with reference to preferred embodiments thereof as illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is an explanatory block diagram illustrating a digital television receiver, to which an embodiment of a reservation information setting apparatus and a method thereof is applied according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an explanatory diagram illustrating a display example of a calendar as a schedule table used in the digital television receiver shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an explanatory diagram illustrating a display example of a schedule input screen that allows an input of schedule information into a calendar as a schedule table;

Fig. 4 is an explanatory diagram illustrating a display example of a broadcast program guide used in the digital television receiver shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is an explanatory diagram illustrating a display example of a calendar as a schedule table that permits reservation information to be displayed;

Fig. 6 is a flowchart illustrating input processing of schedule information, and setting processing of program viewing reservation and recording reservation; and

Fig. 7 is a flowchart that continues from Fig. 6.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0034] One embodiment of a reservation information setting apparatus and a method thereof according to the present invention is described with reference to drawings as follows. In the embodiment described below, the reservation information setting apparatus and the method thereof according to the present invention are described using an example of a case where they are applied to a digital television receiver that has a function of receiving satellite broadcasts and functions of recording/playback broadcast programs (hereinafter merely referred to as 'television receiver').

[0035] Fig. 1 is a block diagram illustrating the television receiver in this embodiment. As shown in Fig. 1, the television receiver of this embodiment comprises a digital tuner connected to a satellite-broadcast receiving antenna 1 (hereinafter merely referred to as 'tuner') section 2, a descramble section 3, a demultiplexer section 4, a decoding section 5, an OSD (On Screen Display) processing section 6, a video-signal processing circuit 7, a display 8, an audio-signal amplifier circuit 9, and a speaker 10.

[0036] In addition, as shown in Fig. 1, the television receiver in this embodiment also comprises a control section 100, a clock circuit 21, a hard-disk drive interface section 22 (hereinafter it is abbreviated as 'HDD I/F section'), a hard-disk drive device section 23 (hereinafter it is abbreviated as 'HDD device section'), a key interface section 24 (hereinafter it is abbreviated as 'key I/F section'), a key operation section 25, a remote controller interface section 26 (hereinafter it is abbreviated as 're-

remote controller I/F section'), a remote control signal receiving section 27.

[0037] The control section 100 is a microcomputer in which a CPU 101, a ROM 102, a RAM 103, and an EEPROM 104 are connected via a CPU bus 105 to constitute the microcomputer, and controls each section of the television receiver of this embodiment. Here, in the ROM 102, processing programs executed in this television receiver, required data, and the like are stored.

[0038] Moreover, the RAM 103 is mainly used as a work area for storing temporarily a result of processing being executed in midstream, and the like. The EEPROM 104 is a memory for storing various kinds of parameter information set by a user, and other information. Additionally, the EEPROM 104 is a so-called nonvolatile memory that is configured to prevent stored information from being lost even if power supply of the television receiver is interrupted.

[0039] Moreover, in Fig. 1, the remote controller 30 is a remote controller for the television receiver of this embodiment, and generates and transmits an infrared remote-control signal in response to an operation input from the user. The remote controller 30 has a power on/off key, a channel key for channel selection, a channel up/down key, and a volume up/down key. The remote controller 30 also has an up arrow key, a down arrow key, a left arrow key, a right arrow key, other various function keys, and the like, which are for example used for selecting a date in a calendar as a schedule table described later, selecting a program from an EPG (Electronic Programming Guide), and the like.

[0040] An infrared remote control signal, which has been transmitted from the remote controller 30 in response to a key pressed by the user, is optically received by the remote control signal receiving section 27 of the television receiver of this embodiment, and then is converted into an electric signal. The remote control signal converted into this electric signal is supplied to the control section 100 through the remote controller I/F section 26.

[0041] As a result, the control section 100 forms a control signal for controlling each section in response to the remote control signal. The control section 100 is configured to perform various kinds of controls including power on/off, channel selection, and volume adjustment by supplying this control signal to each related section in response to an instruction from the user.

[0042] In the television receiver of this embodiment, to which power is supplied, receiving processing of a satellite broadcast signal, channel selection processing, and the like, are performed as described below. To be more specific, a satellite broadcast signal received by the satellite-broadcast receiving antenna 1, which is installed in outdoor location, is supplied to the tuner section 2.

[0043] The tuner section 2 selects and demodulates a satellite-broadcast signal according to a channel-selection control signal from the control section 100, and

supplies the demodulated satellite broadcast signal to the descramble section 3. The channel-selection control signal from the control section 100 is formed in the control section 100 in response to an input of channel-selection operation by the user, which has been accepted through the remote controller 30.

[0044] The descramble section 3 is provided with, for example, key information for decryption by the control section 100, descrambles (decrypts) scrambled data (encrypted data) processed for the satellite broadcast signal that has been received and selected, and then supplies the descrambled satellite broadcast signal to the demultiplexer section 4.

[0045] The satellite broadcast signal is multiplexed with digital data of a plurality of broadcast programs, digital data for forming an electronic program guide called EPG, and the like (by means of, what is called, time-division multiplexing). Therefore, information including the plurality of broadcast programs and the EPG can be delivered by a satellite broadcast signal of one channel.

[0046] Because of it, in the demultiplexer section 4, a video signal and an audio signal of the broadcast program selected by the user are extracted from the satellite broadcast signal from the descramble section 3 according to the program selection control signal from the control section 100. Then, the demultiplexer section 4 supplies the video signal and the audio signal of this extracted broadcast program to the decoding section 5.

[0047] In addition, the demultiplexer section 4 extracts data for forming an EPG using the satellite broadcast signal from the descramble section 3, and supplies the data to the control section 100. This permits the control section 100 to form the EPG according to the data for forming the EPG from the demultiplexer section 4, and to provide this EPG according to an instruction from the user.

[0048] Additionally, in the television receiver in this embodiment, the video signal and the audio signal of the broadcast program, which have been extracted and output in the demultiplexer section 4, are compressed by means of a given encoding method such as, for example, a MPEG (Motion Picture Expert Group) method.

[0049] Because of it, as described below, the decoding section 5 performs decompression processing of the video signal and the audio signal so that the data can be processed in the television receiver of this embodiment. To be more specific, the decoding section 5 of the television receiver in this embodiment comprises an audio-signal decoding section and a video-signal decoding section although those sections are not shown in the diagram. After that, the decoding section 5 performs the decompression processing for the video signal and the audio signal, which have been supplied, according to the given encoding method to reconstruct the original digital video signal before data compression, and to reconstruct the original digital audio signal before data compression.

[0050] Additionally, the decoding section 5 performs

D/A conversion (digital-to-analog conversion) for the reconstructed digital video signal to form an analog video signal, and supplies the analog video signal to the OSD processing section 6. Moreover, the decoding section 5 performs D/A conversion (digital-to-analog conversion) for the reconstructed digital audio signal to form an analog audio signal, and supplies the analog audio signal to the audio-signal amplifier circuit 9.

[0051] The OSD processing section 6 performs video signal processing to display an EPG, a calendar as a schedule table described later, or various kinds of messages in response to the data supplied from the control section 100. The OSD processing section 6 is a so-called text/graphic processing circuit for displaying information such as text, which is not a video of a broadcast program.

[0052] For example, when text information showing a selected channel, a volume bar for showing a volume level, and the like, are displayed according to an instruction from the user, information for displaying them is supplied from the control section 100 to the OSD processing section 6. After that, the display supplied from the control section 100, which includes the text showing the selected channel, and the volume bar, is superimposed on the video signal of the broadcast program. Then, the superimposed signal is supplied to the video-signal processing circuit 7.

[0053] In addition, when displaying an EPG according to an instruction from the user, information for forming the EPG is supplied from the control section 100 to the OSD processing section 6. After that, in the OSD processing section 6, the video signal for displaying the EPG is formed, and then this video signal is supplied to the video-signal processing circuit 7.

[0054] The video-signal processing circuit 7 forms signals in a format for supplying to the display 8 (for example, three primary-color signals of R (red), G (green), and B (blue)) from the supplied analog video signals. Then, the video-signal processing circuit 7 supplies the signals to display 8.

[0055] The display 8 is a CRT (Cathode-Ray Tube) display in this embodiment, and displays the video in response to the supplied video signal in its own display screen. Therefore, the video of the broadcast program, which has been delivered by the satellite broadcast signal and has been selected by the user, is displayed in the display screen of the display 8.

[0056] On the other hand, the audio-signal amplifier circuit 9 amplifies the supplied analog audio signal to a required level, and then supplies this signal to a speaker 10. Therefore, the audio of the broadcast program, which has been delivered by the satellite broadcast signal and has been selected by the user, is output from the speaker 10.

[0057] In this manner, it is possible to receive and select the satellite broadcast signal, and to deliver the signal to the user. Moreover, in the television receiver of this embodiment, as shown in Fig. 1, the HDD device

section 23, which is capable of recording data on the hard disk or of reading data recorded on the hard disk, is connected to the control section 100 via the HDD I/F section 22.

[0058] In this embodiment, when a recording instruction is given by user's operation of the remote controller 30, such as pressing a recording key of the remote controller 30, or the like, a signal of a broadcast program extracted by the demultiplexer section 4 (a video signal and an audio signal of the broadcast program) is supplied to the HDD device section 23 via the control section 100 and the HDD I/F section 22. As a result, the signal of the broadcast program can be recorded on a hard disk of the HDD device section 23.

[0059] In addition, when a playback instruction of the recorded broadcast program is given by user's operation of the remote controller 30, such as pressing a playback key of the remote controller 30, or the like, the HDD device section 23 reads a video signal and an audio signal of the broadcast program recorded on the hard disk contained in itself, and supplies those signals to the decoding section 5 via the HDD I/F section 22 and the control section 100.

[0060] As a result, as described above, in the decoding section 5, decompression processing and D/A conversion are performed for the video signal and the audio signal of the broadcast program recorded on the hard disk of the HDD device section 23. Then, the video of the broadcast program is displayed on the display screen of the display 8, and the audio of the broadcast program is output from the speaker 10.

[0061] In this manner, the television receiver of this embodiment has recording/playback functions that enable us to record a broadcast program provided by a satellite broadcast on the hard disk and to play back and view the program at any time.

[0062] Moreover, the television receiver of this embodiment has the key operation section 25, which is connected through the key I/F section 24. Therefore, the user is allowed to perform operation such as switching on/off of main power supply through the key operation section 25.

[Schedule Management Function, Program Viewing Reservation Function, and Recording Reservation Function]

[0063] Furthermore, the television receiver of this embodiment is provided with the clock circuit 21 as shown in Fig. 1. The clock circuit 21 is configured to provide us with current time, and also has a calendar function that provides information on year, month, day, day of the week, and the like.

[0064] In addition, the television receiver of this embodiment has a schedule management function for managing a schedule of the user in the television receiver of this embodiment by using the calendar function to make a calendar used for a schedule table and by en-

tering schedule information in this calendar.

[0065] Moreover, the television receiver of this embodiment also has the program viewing reservation function and the recording reservation function. The television receiver, therefore, is configured to enable the user to input reservation information about program viewing reservation and recording reservation without a mistake and easily using the calendar as the schedule table and the EPG, which are displayed on the display 8, to store the reservation information in the television receiver of this embodiment.

[0066] Fig. 2 is an explanatory diagram illustrating an example of the calendar as the schedule table (schedule management table), which is displayed on the display screen of the display 8 of the television receiver in this embodiment. The calendar shown in this Fig. 2 is displayed on the display screen of the display 8 of the television receiver by performing predefined calendar displaying operation; for example, pressing a calendar calling key that is provided as a function key in the remote controller 30.

[0067] As shown in Fig. 2, the calendar, which is displayed on the display 8 of the television receiver in this embodiment, is displayed on a base of one month. The calendar shown in this Fig. 2 is an example of a calendar of August in 2000. On an upper side of 'a day of the week' display column of the calendar shown in Fig. 2, "August 2000" is displayed to enable the user to know a month indicated by the calendar. Moreover, in the case of the calendar in the example shown in Fig. 2, a pictograph (pattern) corresponding to content of a schedule can be displayed on a day when there is a schedule.

[0068] The calendar is configured to display a pictograph, which corresponds to content of a schedule, in a display area corresponding to a day when there is a schedule in the following manner: for example, using a pictograph showing a fork and a knife for a day when there is a promise to have a meal; and using a pictograph showing a musical instrument for a day when there is a schedule to go to a concert; and the like. Of course, as described later, the calendar is configured to allow the user to input text information showing time, a place, and the like, in a display area corresponding to a day when there is a schedule, to display the text information.

[0069] In the case of the television receiver of this embodiment, a target date can be selected by changing a cursor position, which moves on a date basis on the displayed calendar, using the up arrow key, the down arrow key, the left arrow key, and the right arrow key of the remote controller 30.

[0070] In this embodiment, an area corresponding to a date, on which a cursor is located, is highlighted. In the case of the example of Fig. 2, the area corresponding to the fourth of August is highlighted, indicating that the cursor is located on the fourth of August. In this case, the cursor position is also managed in the control section 100. After the cursor is located on the target date,

when the selection of the date, on which the cursor is located, is decided by operation of pressing a decision key of the remote controller 30, a schedule input screen for inputting a schedule of the selected day is displayed.

[0071] Fig. 3 is an explanatory diagram illustrating an example of the schedule input screen that is displayed on the display 8 of the television receiver in this embodiment. Concerning the television receiver of this embodiment, when the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3 is displayed, specific information about a schedule on the selected day, for example, text information including time to meet and a place to meet can be inputted by operating the remote controller 30.

[0072] In this embodiment, a character, which can be inputted, is allocated to each key of the remote controller 30. Therefore, the text information can be inputted by operating the remote controller 30. Additionally, it is possible to input the text information by the following operation: performing given operation to display a software keyboard for text-information input on the display screen of the display 8; and using the displayed software keyboard from the remote controller 30 to select characters.

[0073] Moreover, the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3 is configured to display an available pictograph list, which enables the user to select a pictograph corresponding to content of the schedule. Therefore, the user can input the pictograph instead of the text information, or input both of the text information and the pictograph.

[0074] Then, after the text information and the pictograph are inputted, when the decision key of the remote controller 30 is pressed, the text information and the pictograph, which have been inputted, are displayed as schedule information in the calendar shown in Fig. 2. Moreover, the inputted information is recorded on a recording medium, for example, the EEPROM 104, or a hard disk of the HDD device section 23, in the television receiver.

[0075] Moreover, the television receiver of this embodiment is configured to allow the user to select either an EPG icon 81 or a return icon 82 shown on the left end portion of Fig. 3 by using, for example, the up arrow key and the down arrow key of the remote controller 30.

[0076] In this case, in the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3, if the return icon 82 is selected, the process returns to the calendar display screen shown in Fig. 2, allowing the user to select a date. In addition, in the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3, if the EPG icon 81 is selected, the control section 100 of the television receiver creates an EPG of the date selected in the calendar of Fig. 2, and displays this EPG on the display screen of the display 8 of the television receiver.

[0077] Fig. 4 is an explanatory diagram illustrating a display example of an EPG of a selected date (4 August, 2000), which is displayed on the television receiver of this embodiment. In the case of the EPG example shown in Fig. 4, broadcast stations (broadcast channels), which can be selected, are aligned in the display

screen of the display 8 in the horizontal direction, while a time axis is provided in the vertical direction. Information about a broadcast program of each broadcast channel for each period of time is displayed on the display screen.

[0078] In this embodiment, the information about the broadcast program includes the following: start time, a title, casts, and the like, in relation to the broadcast. Moreover, even in the case of this EPG, as is the case with the date selection in the calendar shown in Fig. 2, the user can locate the cursor on a display area of information about a target broadcast program by using the up arrow key, the down arrow key, the left arrow key, and the right arrow key of the remote controller 30.

[0079] In the case of the example shown in Fig. 4, concerning broadcast time from 11 a.m. in a ⑤ EG television column, the cursor is located on a display area of broadcast program information for one hour; and the display area of the broadcast program information, on which the cursor is located, is highlighted. Additionally, the control section 100 of the television receiver is configured to manage the cursor position, to identify which broadcast program is selected, and to identify the day, the broadcast channel, and the period of time, in relation to the selected broadcast program.

[0080] By the way, in Fig. 4, concerning displayed items including ① AB television, ② CD television, and ⑤ EG television, figures including ①, ②, and ⑤ ... correspond to channel numbers for identifying the broadcast channels (transmission paths). To be more specific, ① is channel 1 (1 ch), ② is channel 2 (2 ch), and ⑤ is channel 5 (5 ch).

[0081] Moreover, on the EPG shown in Fig. 4, when locating the cursor on the display area of information about the target broadcast program and pressing the decision key of the remote controller 30, the broadcast program, on which the cursor is located, is selected. As a result, setting of program viewing reservation or recording reservation of the broadcast program (registration) become possible.

[0082] As regards the television receiver of this embodiment, as described using Fig. 4, when the target broadcast program is selected and decided on the EPG displayed on the display 8, the user is allowed to select one of a program viewing reservation icon 91, a recording reservation icon 92, and the return icon 93, which are displayed on the left end portion of the screen shown in Fig. 4, by using, for example, the up arrow key and the down arrow key of the remote controller 30.

[0083] In this case, the program viewing reservation icon 91 is used for instructing to perform program viewing reservation, and the recording reservation icon 92 is used for instructing to perform recording reservation. In addition, as is the case with the return icon 82 in the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3, the return icon 93 is used for instructing to return to the calendar display screen in Fig. 2.

[0084] Moreover, when the recording reservation icon

92 is selected using the up arrow key and the down arrow key of the remote controller 30 and then the decision key of the remote controller 30 is pressed. the control section 100 of the television receiver performs reservation recording setting processing as follows: hiding the EPG display; returning to the calendar display described above using Fig. 2; displaying the information about the broadcast program, for which recording is reserved in that calendar, in a display area for the selected date; and recording the setting information of the recording reservation on the EEPROM 104 of the television receiver of this embodiment.

[0085] Fig. 5 is an explanatory diagram illustrating an example of a calendar display that is configured to display information about a broadcast program for which recording is reserved. In this embodiment, as described above using Fig. 2, 4 August 2000 is selected in the calendar displayed on the display 8. In addition, as described above using Fig. 4, a broadcast program from 11 a.m. of ⑤ EG television column (a program, of which a period of broadcast time is one hour) is selected on the EPG displayed on the display 8.

[0086] Because of it, in the case of this example, as shown in Fig. 5, in the calendar of August 2000, a display column showing a schedule on the fourth is highlighted. In that display column, the following are displayed: "11:00 am" that is information showing broadcast start time of the broadcast program for which recording is reserved; and "xx (5 ch)" that is information showing a broadcast channel of the broadcast program.

[0087] Moreover, in this embodiment, the setting information of the recording reservation recorded in the EEPROM 104 includes recording start-time information, recording end-time information, broadcast channel information, and program selection information. The setting information is kept in the control section 100 that created the EPG. The information about the broadcast program selected in the displayed EPG is extracted, and is used as display information, or as setting information to the EEPROM 104.

[0088] When the setting information of the recording reservation is set to the EEPROM 104, the control section 100 of the television receiver monitors the clock circuit 21 according to the setting information of the recording reservation in the EEPROM 104. When the control section 100 detects that the broadcast time of the broadcast program for which recording is reserved has come, the control section 100 performs the following: controlling each section of the television receiver; supplying power to the television receiver; receiving and selecting a broadcast channel of a target broadcast program; selecting the target broadcast program; and recording the broadcast program on the hard disk of the HDD device section 23.

[0089] By the way, in this case, an example of a case where recording reservation of the target broadcast program is performed is described. However, program viewing reservation can also be performed almost in the

same manner. To be more specific, as described using Fig. 4, selecting and deciding the target broadcast program on the EPG displayed on the display 8 enables the user to select the program viewing reservation icon 91, the recording reservation icon 92, and the return icon 93.

[0090] Moreover, when the program viewing reservation icon 91 is selected using the up arrow key and the down arrow key of the remote controller 30 and then the decision key of the remote controller 30 is pressed, setting processing of program viewing reservation is performed as follows: hiding the EPG display; displaying information about the broadcast program, for which program viewing is reserved, in the schedule table described above using Fig. 2; and recording the setting information of the program viewing reservation on the EEPROM 104 of the television receiver of this embodiment.

[0091] Additionally, even in the case of this program viewing reservation, information such as broadcast start time of the broadcast program for which program viewing is reserved, and a broadcast channel of the broadcast program is displayed on the calendar as the schedule table. Moreover, the program start-time information, the program end-time information, the broadcast channel information, and the program selection information are recorded, as setting information of the program viewing reservation, on the EEPROM 104. When the setting information of the program viewing reservation is set to the EEPROM 104, the control section 100 of the television receiver monitors the clock circuit 21 according to the setting information of the program viewing reservation in the EEPROM 104.

[0092] Then, when the control section 100 detects that the broadcast date and time of the broadcast program for which program viewing is reserved has come, the control section 100 performs the following: controlling each section of the television receiver; receiving and selecting the broadcast channel of the target broadcast program; selecting the target broadcast program; and even when another broadcast program is being viewed, selecting the broadcast signal of the broadcast program for which program viewing is reserved, and selecting the target broadcast program to allow the user to view the target broadcast program.

[0093] In this manner, in the schedule input screen shown in Fig. 3, when the user wants to input reservation information about the broadcast program including program viewing reservation and recording reservation, which is not a schedule information input, the user is allowed to input the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation of the target broadcast program in the television receiver for settings only by the following simple operation: displaying an EPG of the selected day on the display 8, and selecting the target broadcast program through the displayed EPG.

[Setting Processing for Schedule Information Input, Program Viewing Reservation, and Recording Reservation]

[0094] Next, setting processing for schedule information input, program viewing reservation, and recording reservation, which are performed in the television receiver of this embodiment described with reference to Figs. 2 through 5, is described with reference to flowcharts of Figs. 6 and 7. Processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7 is processing performed in the control section 100 of the television receiver that has received a remote control signal from the remote controller 30.

[0095] When the control section 100 of the television receiver of this embodiment receives a remote control signal from the remote controller 30, the control section 100 judges whether or not the received remote control signal is provided in response to a key input for calling a calendar (step S1). In the judgment processing of the step S1 if the control section 100 judges that the received remote control signal is not provided in response to a calendar calling key, the control section 100 ends the processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7, and performs another processing in response to the received remote control signal.

[0096] In the judgment processing of the step S1, if the control section 100 judges that the remote control signal from the remote controller 30 is provided in response to the calendar calling key, the control section 100 performs the following: referring to current year, month, and day of the clock circuit 21; creating a calendar (schedule table that includes calendar information) of a month that includes the current year, month, and day (that is to say, this month) (step S2); and displaying the calendar on the display 8 through the OSD processing section 6 and the video-signal processing circuit 7 as described above using Fig. 2 (step S3).

[0097] Next, the control section 100 judges whether or not a date in the displayed calendar was selected (step S4). To be more specific, the judgment processing of the step S4 is processing for judging whether or not date selection in the calendar is decided by pressing of the decision key. If the control section 100 judges that no date is selected in the judgment processing of the step S4, the processing from the step S3 is repeated.

[0098] If the control section judges that the date has been selected in the judgment processing of the step S4, the control section 100, as shown in Fig. 3, displays a schedule input screen of the selected date on the display 8 (step S5), and accepts a schedule information input, and a selection input by the EPG icon 81 and the return icon 82.

[0099] The control section 100 of the television receiver judges whether or not the EPG icon 81 has been selected (step S6). If the control section judges that the EPG icon 81 has not been selected, then the control section 100 judges whether or not schedule information has been inputted (step S7).

[0100] In the judgment processing of the step S7, if the control section 100 judges that the schedule information has not been inputted, the control section 100 judges whether or not a predetermined definite period of time has elapsed; that is to say, the control section 100 judges whether or not a timeout occurred (step S8). In the judgment processing of the step S8, if the control section 100 judges that the definite time has not elapsed, the processing from the step S6 is repeated.

[0101] In addition, in the judgment processing of the step S8, if the control section 100 judges that neither the selection of the EPG icon 81 nor the input of given information have been made from the schedule input screen display within the definite period of time, in other words, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has occurred, the control section 100 ends the processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7. After that, the television receiver of this embodiment enters, for example, a state in which it waits for an instruction to perform new processing.

[0102] Moreover, in the judgment processing of the step S7, if the control section 100 judges that the schedule information has been inputted, the control section 100 judges whether or not the decision key of the remote controller 30 has been pressed (step S9). In the judgment processing of the step S9, if the control section 100 judges that the decision key has been pressed, the control section 100 adds the inputted schedule information to the calendar, stores the inputted schedule information in, for example, a schedule-information storing area of the EEPROM 104 (step S10), and repeats the processing from the step S3.

[0103] As a result, the calendar, which also includes the newly inputted schedule information, is displayed allowing the user to input more schedule information.

[0104] Moreover, in the judgment processing of the step S9, if the control section 100 judges that the decision key of the remote controller 30 has not been pressed, the control section 100 judges whether or not the return icon 83 has been selected (step S11). In the judgment processing of the step S11, if the control section 100 judges that the return icon 81 has been selected, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S3, and displays the calendar again allowing the user to input schedule information.

[0105] In the judgment processing of the step S11, if the control section 100 judges that the return icon 82 has not been selected, the control section 100 judges whether or not a predetermined definite period of time has elapsed since the schedule information input; that is to say, the control section 100 judges whether or not a timeout has occurred (step S12). In the judgment processing of the step S12, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has not yet occurred, the processing from the step S9 is repeated.

[0106] In the judgment processing of the step S12, if the control section 100 judges that neither the pressing of the decision key nor the selection of the return icon

82 have been made within the predetermined definite period of time after the schedule information input. In other words, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has occurred, the control section 100 ends the processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7 in the television receiver of this embodiment, and then enters, for example,

[0107] In this manner, the processing section shown in Fig. 6 is a processing section for inputting schedule information in the calendar as the schedule table. In the judgment processing of the step S6 shown in Fig. 6, if the control section judges that the EPG icon 81 has been selected in the schedule input screen displayed in the step S5 shown in Fig. 3, the control section 100 displays an EPG having the selected date on the display 8 as shown in Fig. 7 (step S13).

[0108] Then, the control section 100 judges whether or not the broadcast program, for which program viewing reservation or recording reservation is desired, has been selected (step S14). In the judgment processing of the step S14, if the control section 100 judges that the broadcast program for which reservation is desired has not been selected, the control section 100 judges whether or not the return icon 93 has been selected in the EPG display screen shown in Fig. 4 (step S15).

[0109] In the judgment processing of the step S15, if the control section 100 judges that the return icon 93 has been selected, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S2 in Fig. 6. In the judgment processing of the step S15, if the control section 100 judges that the return icon 93 has not been selected, the control section 100 judges whether or not neither the broadcast program nor the return icon has been selected within a predetermined definite period of time after the EPG display, and as a result, a timeout has occurred (step S16).

[0110] In the judgment processing of the step S16, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has not yet occurred, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S14. On the other hand, in the judgment processing of the step S16, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has occurred, the control section 100 ends the processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7 in the television receiver of this embodiment, and then enters, for example, in a state in which it waits for an instruction to perform new processing.

[0111] After that, in the judgment processing of the step S14, if the control section 100 judges that the broadcast program for which reservation is desired has been selected, the control section 100 judges whether or not the program viewing reservation icon 91 has been selected in the EPG display screen shown in Fig. 4 (step S17). If the control section 100 judges that the program viewing reservation icon 91 has been selected, the control section 100 proceeds to judgment processing of a step S19.

[0112] In the judgment processing of the step S17, if

the control section 100 judges that the program viewing reservation icon 91 has not been selected, the control section 100 judges whether or not the recording reservation icon 92 has been selected (step S18). If the control section 100 judges that the recording reservation icon has not been selected in the judgment processing of the step S18, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S14.

[0113] Then, if the control section 100 judges that the program viewing reservation icon 91 has been selected in the judgment processing of the step S17 described above, and if the control section 100 judges that the recording reservation icon has been selected in the judgment processing of step S18, the control section 100 judges whether or not the decision key of the remote controller 30 has been pressed (step S19).

[0114] Then, if the control section 100 judges that the decision key of the remote controller 30 has been pressed in the judgment processing of the step S19, it is judged that the broadcast program, for which program viewing reservation or recording reservation is desired is decided. After that, as described above using Fig. 5, the control section 100 adds setting information of the program viewing reservation or setting information of the recording reservation to the calendar, and stores the setting information of the program viewing reservation or the setting information of the recording reservation in the EEPROM 104 (step S20). After the processing of the step S20, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S2 shown in Fig. 6, inputs schedule information into the calendar, and sets the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation.

[0115] On the other hand, in the judgment processing of the step S19, if the control section 100 judges that the decision key has not been pressed, the control section 100 judges whether or not the decision key has been pressed within a predetermined definite period of time after the selection of the broadcast program to be reserved; that is to say, the control section 100 judges whether or not a timeout has occurred (step S21).

[0116] In the judgment processing of the step S21, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has not yet occurred, the control section 100 repeats the processing from the step S19. On the other hand, in the judgment processing of the step S21, if the control section 100 judges that the timeout has occurred, the control section 100 ends the processing shown in Figs. 6 and 7, and then enters, for example, a state in which it waits for an instruction to perform new processing.

[0117] In this manner, the television receiver of this embodiment is capable of setting the recording reservation and the program viewing reservation of a broadcast program using the calendar as the schedule table and the EPG. Accordingly, the user can perform the recording reservation, and the program viewing reservation taking user's own schedule into consideration. In addition, because it is not necessary to input setting information such as broadcast start time, broadcast end

time, and a broadcast channel in relation to the target broadcast program, the user can perform the recording reservation and the program viewing reservation correctly and easily.

[0118] In this connection, in this embodiment, the television receiver is configured to allow the user to input schedule information, and to set the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation, after displaying the calendar as the schedule table and selecting a date. However, it is not limited to this. For example, the television receiver can also be configured to display an EPG immediately, without displaying the schedule input screen, to allow the user to set the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation through the EPG by selecting a date after selecting the EPG icon, which is provided in the left end portion of the screen, in the display screen of the calendar shown in Fig. 2.

[0119] Additionally, when the program viewing reservation is performed, and when the recording reservation is performed, a date display area, which corresponds to the date selected in the calendar, displays information almost in the same manner. However, adding a display for clearly differentiating between the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation enables clear notification of a kind of the performed reservation, that is, the program viewing reservation or the recording reservation. Of course, the setting information of the program viewing reservation and the setting information of the recording reservation, which are set to the EEPROM 104, can be differentiated by, for example, flag information, and the like, which are added.

[0120] Moreover, in the above-mentioned embodiment, displaying the calendar, which includes current year, month, and day, is described. However, it is not limited to this. It is also possible to configure the calendar to allow the user to specify a month, which the user wishes to display, in the beginning. In addition, while displaying, in the beginning, the calendar that includes current year, month, and day, it is also possible to display a past calendar for checking, and to display a future calendar to record a schedule determined earlier, by using the arrow keys, and the like, for scrolling and form feeding of the calendar.

[0121] Furthermore, the calendar can also be configured to allow the user to cancel (clear) the inputted schedule information, the setting of the program viewing reservation, and the recording reservation information by adding a cancel icon to the calendar display. Additionally, the calendar is also configured to allow the user to modify the inputted schedule information of the calendar.

[0122] Moreover, in the above-mentioned embodiment, the display 8 is a CRT display, which is configured to accept an input by user's operation using the remote controller 30. However, it is not limited to this. It is also possible to configure a thin television receiver using, for example, a LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) for a display.

[0123] Moreover, attaching a touch panel to a display

surface of the CRT display or the LCD enables the user to select a date from the calendar, and to input schedule information using a software keyboard, through easy operation, that is, touching the display surface of the display with a finger or the like. Providing a decision icon also enables the user to perform a decision input through the decision icon in the display screen.

[0124] In the embodiment described above, the reservation information setting apparatus and the method thereof according to the present invention were described using the example of the case where they are applied to the digital television receiver that has a function of receiving satellite broadcasts and functions of recording/playback broadcast programs. However, the reservation information setting apparatus and the method thereof according to the present invention are effective not only for the digital television receiver described above.

[0125] Embodiments of the present invention can be applied to various kinds of receivers having a function of receiving broadcast signals in various forms including, for example, television broadcast signals, radio broadcast signals, broadcast signals of data broadcasts, satellite broadcast signals, cable television broadcasts, and the like. In addition, embodiments of the present invention can be applied to various kinds of electric equipment including the following: communications equipment, which is provided with programs through a communication network such as Internet; personal computers; and recording apparatuses such as VTR, STB, IRD, and MD (MiniDisc).

[0126] Moreover, embodiments of the present invention can also be applied to a relay apparatus (base apparatus) for information signals and control signals, which connects information output apparatuses such as VTR and STB with information input apparatuses such as a monitor receiver by wire or by wireless means. Furthermore, it is also possible to apply embodiments of the present invention to a remote command unit that comprises a display element having a comparatively large display screen.

[0127] To be more specific, embodiments of the present invention can be applied to various kinds of equipment including the following: a receiver that receives various kinds of broadcast signals and information signals; various kinds of information output apparatuses that output information signals such as video signals and audio signals, and that deliver the signals to other electronic equipment and users; an information-signal input apparatus that accepts an information signal input; a recording apparatus that records broadcast signals and information signals; and others.

[0128] In short, embodiments of the present invention can be applied to any apparatuses as long as the apparatuses have the following functions: a function of forming a signal for displaying a calendar as a schedule table; a function of accepting date selection in the schedule table; a function of accepting schedule information

for the schedule table; and a function of accepting reservation information. In this case, the schedule table, which is displayed by the signal formed by the function of forming the signal for displaying the schedule table, may be displayed on its own display element, or may be supplied to another separate apparatus to display the schedule table on a display element of the separate apparatus.

[0129] Moreover, of course, the function of accepting date selection in the schedule table, a function of accepting schedule information for the schedule table, and the function of accepting the reservation information may be configured to accept not only a direct input by user's operation, but also an input delivered from other electronic equipment by wire or by wireless means.

[0130] In addition, the television receiver of the above-mentioned embodiment is described as a receiver capable of receiving only satellite broadcast signals. However, embodiments of the present invention can also be applied to a receiver having a combined function of receiving not only satellite broadcast signals but also broadcast signals of various broadcasts such as terrestrial broadcasts, data broadcasts, and cable broadcasts.

[0131] Variations of reservation processing may be changed in response to an apparatus function. For example, in the case of the receiver, only program viewing reservation is performed; and in the case of recording equipment such as a VTR and a digital VTR, or a DVD recording/playback apparatus, only recording reservation is performed.

[0132] Moreover, in the embodiment described above, the EPG as the broadcast program guide is formed using information for forming the EPG, which is provided as information included in the satellite broadcast signal, to allow the user to select the target broadcast program by using this EPG. However, it is not limited to this.

[0133] For example, broadcast program guide information, which is used for forming the broadcast program guide for display, may be provided periodically through Internet or a telephone network. In addition, as is the case with monthly magazines and weekly magazines, the broadcast program guide information may be provided, of course, through a recording medium by selling a recording medium such as a CD-ROM and a floppy disk.

[0134] Additionally, as is the case with the schedule information input to the calendar as the schedule table without using the broadcast program guide such as the EPG, of course, the program viewing reservation and the recording reservation may be performed by inputting broadcast start time, broadcast channel, program identification information, and broadcast end time, and the like on the target day.

[0135] Moreover, embodiments of the present invention can also be applied to so-called audio equipment including a receiver of radio broadcasts, a cassette tape recorder, and a small magneto-optical-disc recording/

playback apparatus called MD (MiniDisc).

[0136] In so far as the embodiments of the invention described above are implemented, at least in part, using software-controlled data processing apparatus, it will be appreciated that a computer program providing such software control and a storage medium by which such a computer program is stored are envisaged as aspects of the present invention.

[0137] Although particular embodiments have been described herein, it will be appreciated that the invention is not limited thereto and that many modifications and additions thereto may be made within the scope of the invention. For example, various combinations of the features of the following dependent claims can be made with the features of the independent claims without departing from the scope of the present invention.

Claims

1. A reservation information setting apparatus comprising:

schedule table forming means for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information;

date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in said schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from said schedule table forming means;

schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means; and

reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means.

2. A reservation information setting apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

display instruction accepting means for accepting an input of an instruction to display a broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date if a selection input of the target date is accepted through said date selection accepting means; and

broadcast program guide forming means for forming a signal for displaying the broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date on the basis of broadcast program guide information if a display of the broadcast program guide is instructed through said display instruction accepting means;

wherein said reservation information accepting means accepts an input of the reservation information through the broadcast program guide formed by said broadcast program guide forming means.

3. A reservation information setting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said schedule table forming means forms a signal for displaying the schedule table that includes the schedule information accepted through said schedule information accepting means, and the reservation information accepted through said reservation information accepting means.

4. A reservation information setting apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said broadcast program guide information is included in a broadcast signal for the purpose of delivery.

5. Electronic equipment comprising:

a reservation information setting apparatus including: schedule table forming means for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information; date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in said schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from said schedule table forming means; schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means; and reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means; reservation information storing means for storing said reservation information accepted through said reservation information accepting means; and viewing control means for controlling a broadcast program shown by viewing reservation information so as to permit the broadcast program to be viewed if the reservation information stored in said reservation information storing means is the viewing reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the viewing reservation information is detected.

6. Electronic equipment comprising:

a reservation information setting apparatus including: schedule table forming means for

forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information; date selection accepting means for accepting a selection input of a target date in said schedule table that is formed in response to the signal from said schedule table forming means; schedule information accepting means for accepting an input of schedule information of the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means; and reservation information accepting means for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the date in the schedule table, which has been selected through said date selection accepting means; reservation information storing means for storing said reservation information accepted through said reservation information accepting means; information signal storing means for storing an information signal; and recording control means for controlling a broadcast program shown by recording reservation information so as to record the broadcast program in said information signal storing means if the reservation information stored in said reservation information storing means is the recording reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the recording reservation information is detected.

7. A reservation information setting method comprising:

a schedule table displaying step for forming a signal for displaying a schedule table that includes calendar information, and for displaying the schedule table;
a date selection accepting step for accepting a selection input of a target date in the schedule table that is displayed in said schedule table displaying step;
a schedule information accepting step for accepting an input of schedule information about the target date in the schedule table, which has been selected in said date selection accepting step; and
a reservation information accepting step for accepting an input of reservation information such as viewing reservation, or recording reservation, of a broadcast program on the target date in the schedule table, which has been selected in said date selection accepting step.

8. A reservation information setting method according to Claim 7, further comprising:

a display instruction accepting step for accepting an input of an instruction to display a broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date if a selection input of the target date is accepted in said date selection accepting step; and
 a broadcast program guide displaying step for forming a signal for displaying the broadcast program guide corresponding to the target date on the basis of broadcast program guide information, and for displaying said broadcast program guide, if a display of the broadcast program guide is instructed in said display instruction accepting step;

wherein, in said reservation information accepting step, the reservation information is accepted through the broadcast program guide displayed in said broadcast program guide displaying step.

9. A reservation information setting method according to Claim 7, wherein, in said schedule table displaying step, a signal for displaying the schedule table that includes the schedule information accepted in said schedule information accepting step, and the reservation information accepted in said reservation information accepting step is formed.
10. A reservation information setting method according to Claim 8, wherein said broadcast program guide information is included in a broadcast signal for the purpose of delivery.
11. A reservation information setting method according to Claim 7, further comprising:

a reservation information storing step for storing said reservation information accepted in said reservation information accepting step in storing means; and
 a viewing reservation executing step for permitting a broadcast program shown by viewing reservation information to be viewed if the reservation information stored in said storing means in said reservation information storing step is the viewing reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the viewing reservation information is detected.

12. A reservation information setting method according to Claim 7, further comprising:

a reservation information storing step for storing said reservation information accepted in said reservation information accepting step in storing means; and
 a recording reservation executing step for re-

ording a broadcast program shown by recording reservation information in information signal storing means if the reservation information stored in said storing means in said reservation information storing step is the recording reservation information about the broadcast program, and when coming of date and time shown by the recording reservation information is detected.

FIG. 1

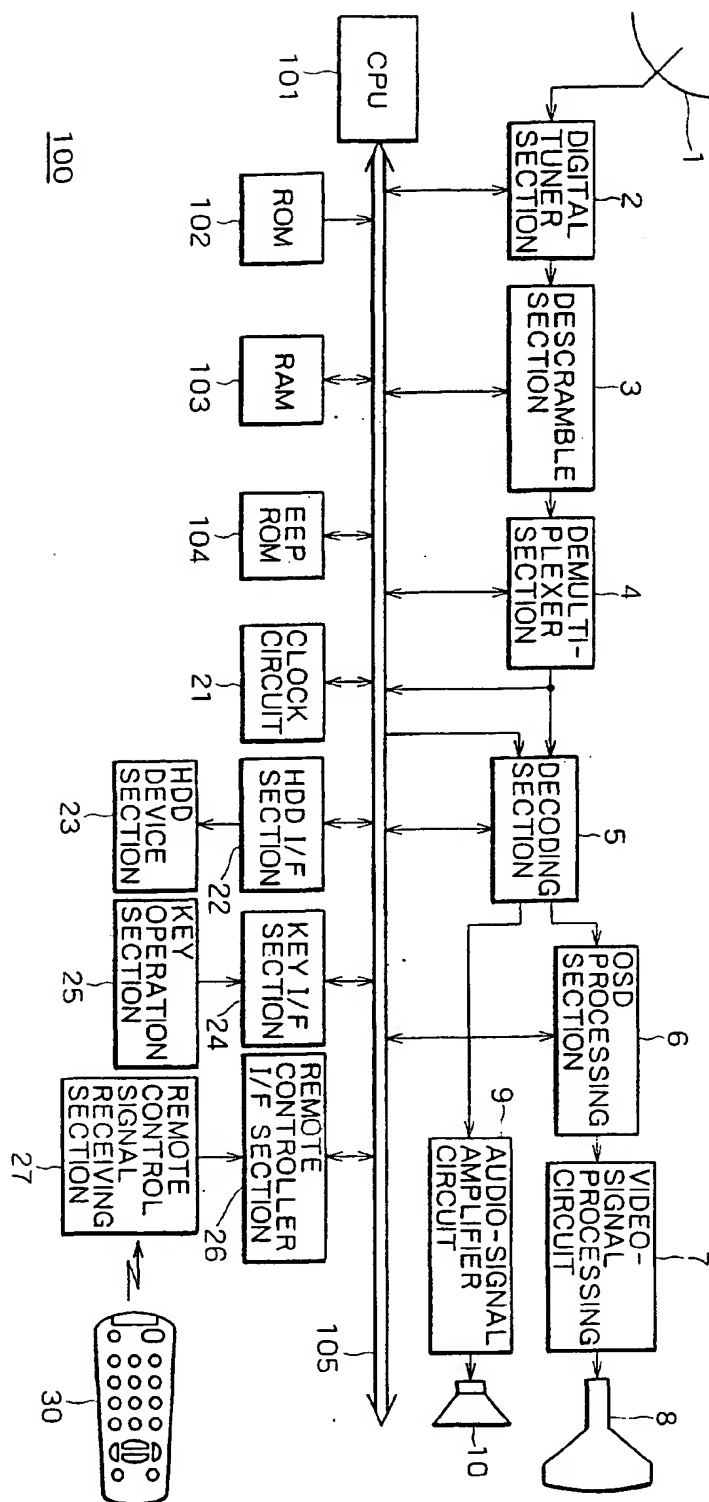


FIG. 2

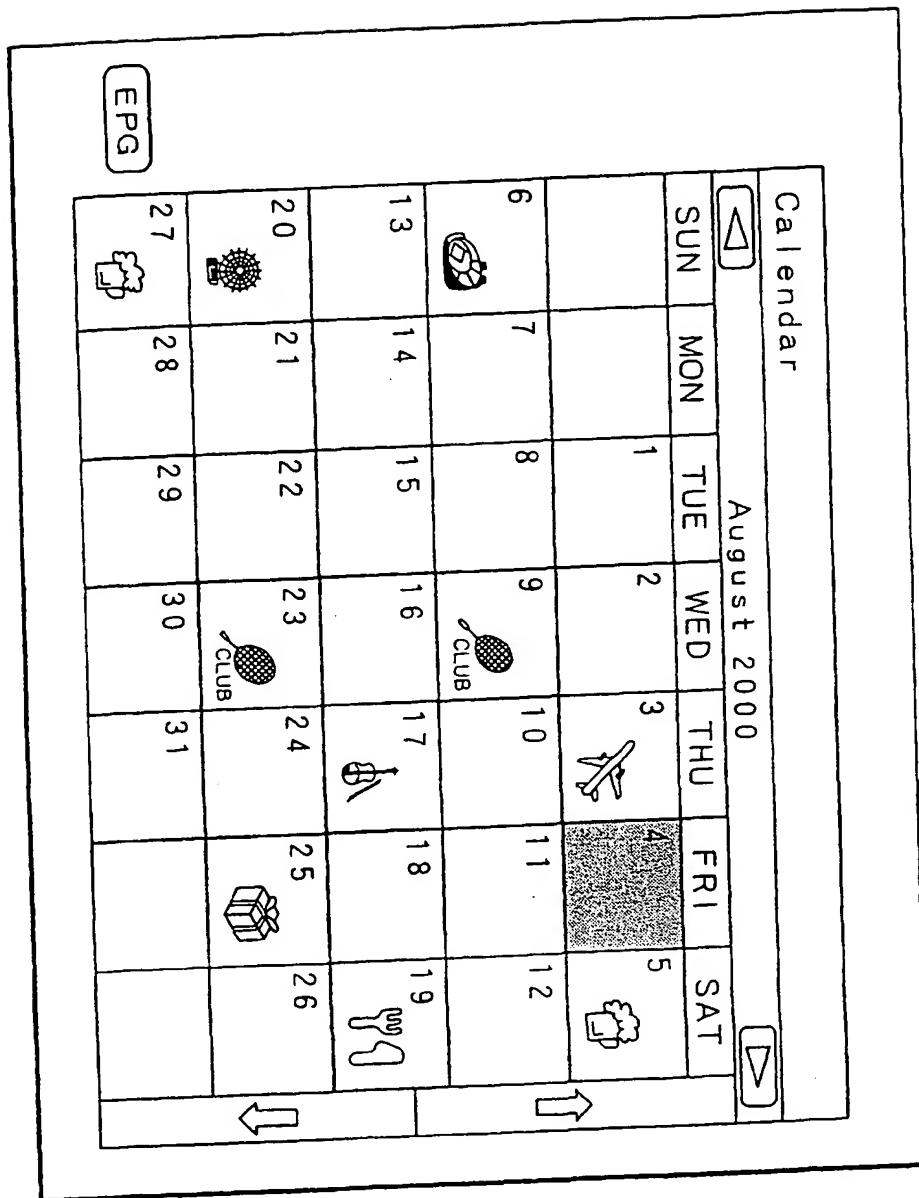


FIG. 3

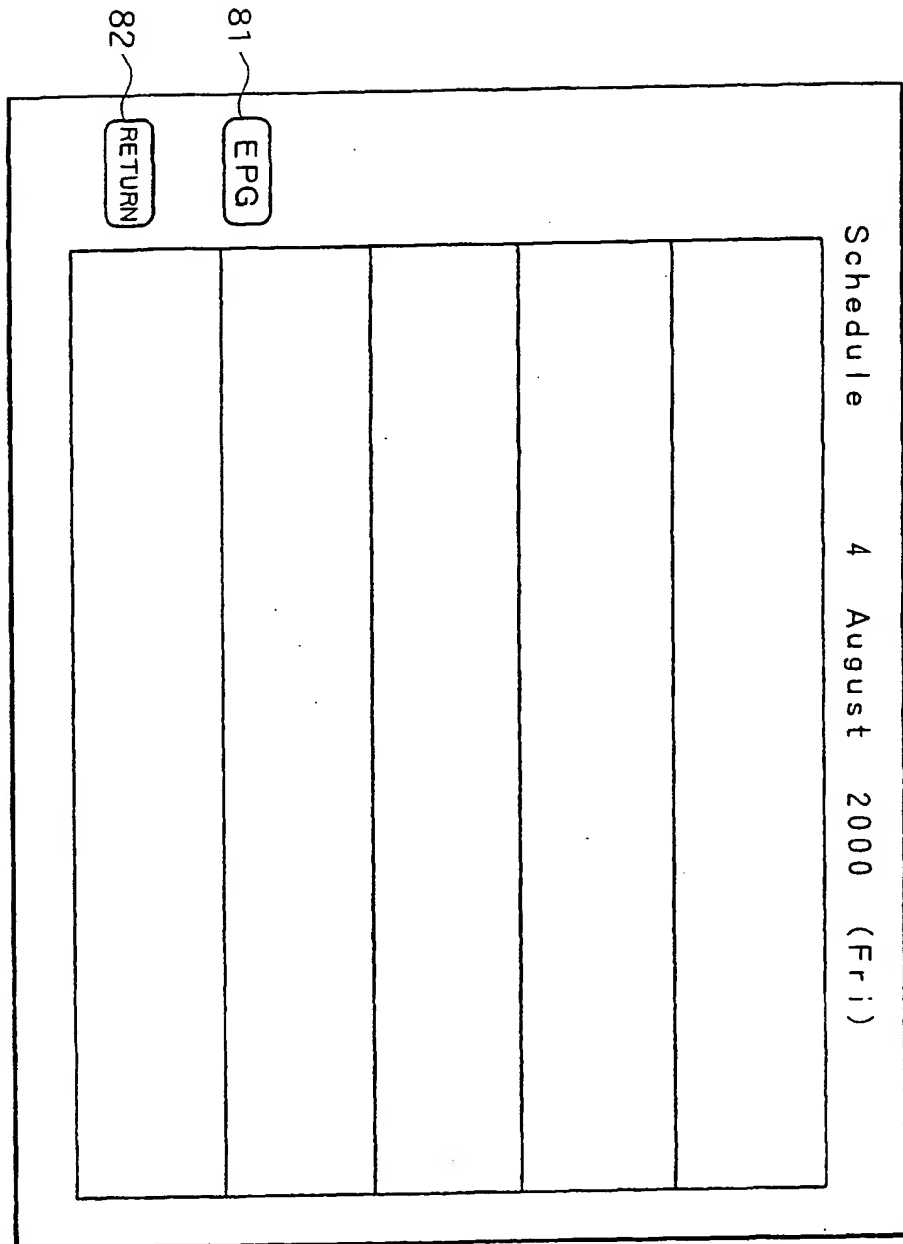


FIG. 4

4 August 2000 (Fri)

0AB TELEVISION		0CD TELEVISION		0EG TELEVISION		0EK TELEVISION		0TELEVISION VA	
00 XXXXX XXX		30		00 ++++++		30 -----			
11-54 ><<><>		00 00000 000		00 11111 111		30 AAAA MM		00 ++++++	
12		00 XXXXX XXX		00		00 WWWW WW		00	
13-50 XXXXX XXX						50 AAAA MM		00	

91 PROGRAM

92 RECORD

93 RETURN

FIG. 5

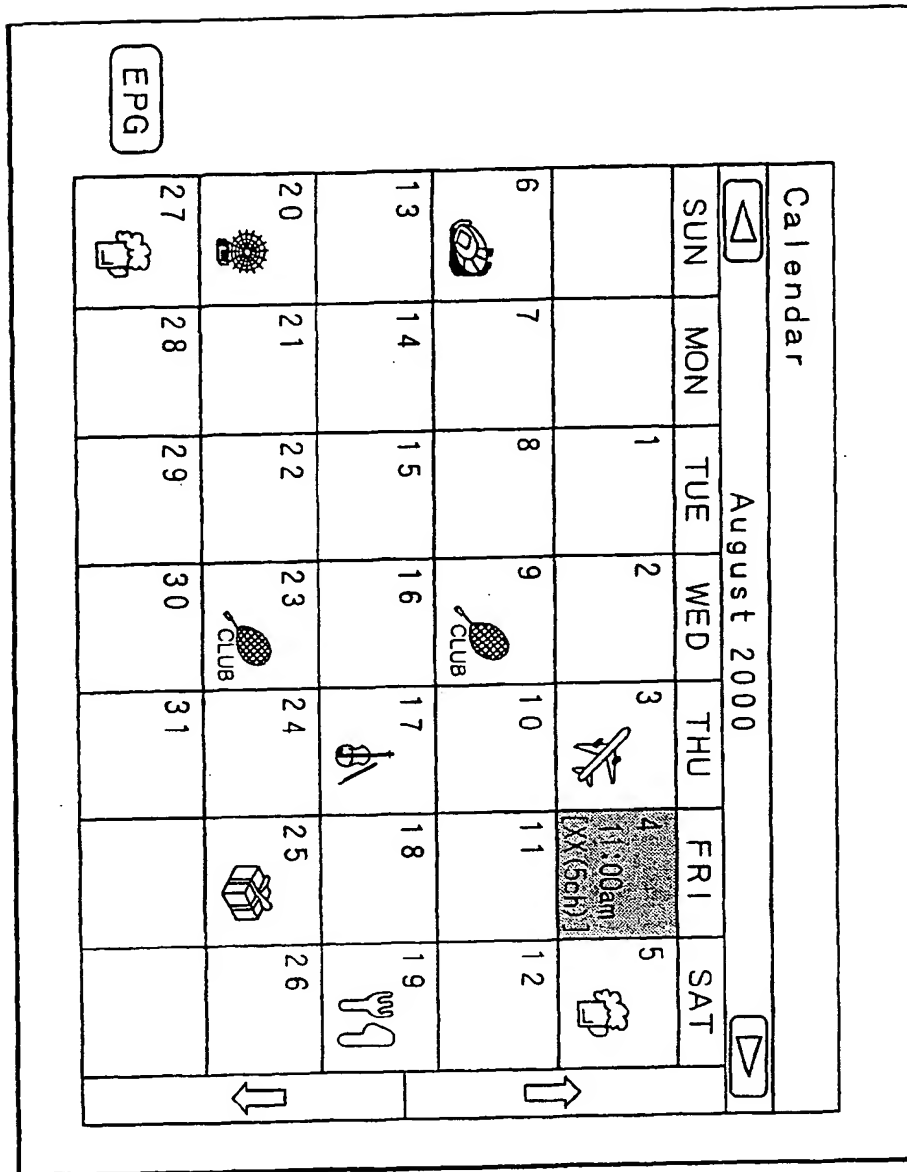


FIG. 6

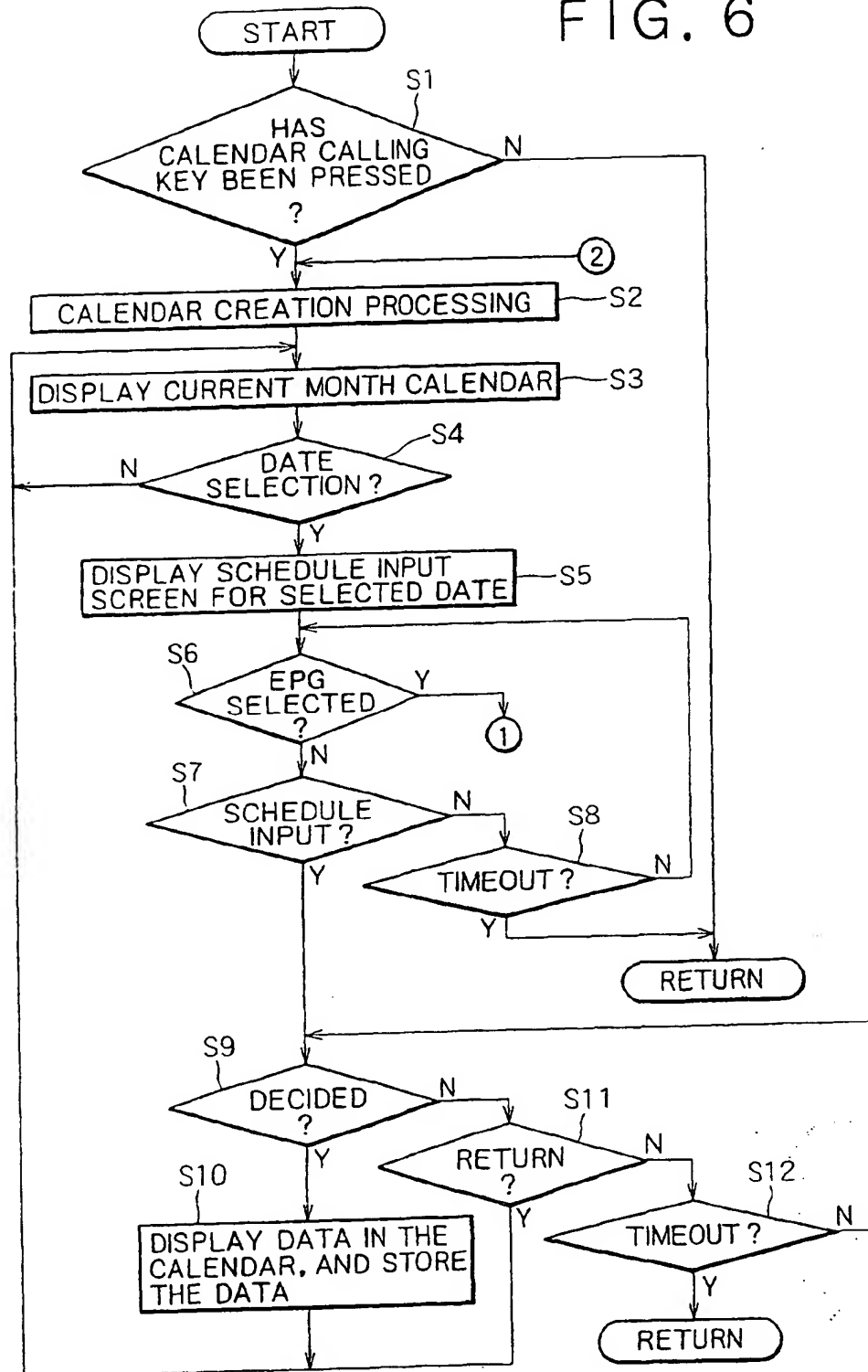


FIG. 7

